

Spring 1-15-1999

## ENG 2205-003: Introduction to Literary Studies

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English 2205-003 Introduction to Literary Studies  
Spring semester 1999  
TTH 2-3:15 CH 303  
Dr. Susan Bazargan  
Office: CH323 Office Hours: TTH: 10:45-12:30 and by appointment  
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**Required texts:**

Abrams, et. al, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (Vols. I and II)  
Byatt, *Possession*  
Gibaldi, *The MLA Handbook*  
Holman, *A Handbook to Literature*  
Lentricchia, *Critical Terms for Literary Study*  
Richter, *The Critical Tradition* (CT)  
Richter, *Falling into Theory* (FT)  
Shelley, *Frankenstein*

**Course Description and Requirements:**

In this course, you'll be asked to explore the activity that occupies a great deal of your time and yet is taken for granted: the act of reading. You'll become familiar with the rudiments of the history of literary criticism, its main concepts and issues. You will find out why and how a text can be read in different ways, and you'll be asked to evaluate readings. You'll also be introduced to some basic tools and strategies used by a literary scholar. This is an exciting and challenging course. Your *active* participation in class discussions is expected.

Attendance policy: If you have more than two unexcused absences during the semester, your grade for the course will be lowered by one point. If you are ill or have to take care of an emergency, CALL (see phone numbers above) and let me know.

Assignments, papers and presentations:

- 1) Class questions: Each day when you come to class, bring with you a list of three written questions on the assigned material for that day. I will collect these "lists" at the beginning of the class period. I'm hoping these questions will substitute for quizzes. If I get a sense that you are not keeping up with the reading, I'll start giving quizzes at the beginning of each class. Your questions will be used during class discussions.
- 2) Library project
- 3) Two short papers (each 2 pages long)
- 4) An introductory essay (4-5 pages long) for your casebook study.
- 5) One oral presentation on an author of your choice.

Exams: There will be a midterm and a final exam for this course.

Grading policy: Class questions and participation in discussions: 15%; Two short papers: 20% ; Introductory essay and casebook: 15%; Library project: 10%; Oral presentation: 10%; Midterm 15%; Final 15%

Conferences: Please stop by my office to discuss any problem or question related to the course. You can also make an appointment if my regular office hours are inconvenient for you.

The English Department policy on plagiarism states that "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--'the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*) has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

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### **Class meetings:**

1/12: Introduction to the course. Discussion of the library project

1/14: Doing research in the library. We'll meet at the circulation desk of Booth Library.

### **I. How we read: A basic review**

1/19: Discussion of poems by Dickinson, "Apparently with no surprise" and Frost, "The Road Not Taken" (handout) and Yeats, "The Second Coming" (in Abrams, II) . Bring Holman. Look up the following terms: image, irony, allegory, persona, image, stanza, paradox, negative capability, determinacy, indeterminacy.

1/21: E.M. Forster, "The Road from Colonus" in Abrams, II. Bring Holman. Look up the following terms: realism, point of view, allusion, symbol, setting, characterization, denouement, explication de texte. What are some of the outstanding allusions and symbols in Forster's story? What is their purpose?

### **II. How we read: Some critical maps**

1/26: Richter, CT, "Introduction" pp. 1-8

Richter, CT, Introduction to Plato, 17-20, From *Ion*, 29-33.

1/28: Richter, CT 38-42, Introduction to Aristotle 38-42; from *Poetics*, 42-44.

Two poems: Dickinson, "I reckon--when I count at all" and Plath, "The Disquieting Muses"

2/2: Richter, CT, pp. 703-708.

In Holman, look up "Criticism" (pp. 112-113); "New Criticism"; "Intentional Fallacy"; "Affective Fallacy." Discussion of five poems: "Ode on a Grecian Urn"; "Dulce et

Decorum est"; "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night"; "Digging" (all in Abrams, II), and "I Once Gave My Daughters.." (handout)

2/4: Discussion of poems continued. Richter, FT, "How we Read" 205-217.

**First short paper is due.**

### **III. How we read: Beyond New Criticism.**

#### **Some Issues in Literary Studies**

2/9: Mitchell, "Representation" in Lentricchia and the discussion of "My Last Duchess"

2/11: McLaughlin, "Figurative Language" and Graff, "Determinacy/Indeterminacy" in Lentricchia (we'll also discuss the poems included in these essays).

2/16: Appirah, "Race" in Lentricchia and Henry Louis Gates, "Canon-Formation, Literary History and the Afro-American Tradition" in Richter, FT.

2/18: Morrison, "Black Matter(s)" in Richter, FT. Poems: "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and "Theme for English B" (handout)

2/23: Deane, "Imperialism/Nationalism" in Lentricchia. Gordimer, "The Moment the Gun Went Off" and Walcott, "Midsummer" (both in Abrams, II)

2/25: Jehlen, "Gender" in Lentricchia. Woolf, "A Room of One's Own" pp. 1926-1956 (in Abrams, II)

### **IV: What we read: Pleasures and problems of the canon**

3/2: "What we Read" in Richter, FT

Some canonical texts in literary criticism (relevant to our discussion of *Frankenstein*):

Marx, pp. 385-393 in Richter, CT

**Second short paper is due.**

3/4: Freud, "Creative Writers and Daydreaming" and Jung, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry" (both in Richter, CT)

3/9: Gilbert and Gubar, from *Infection in the Sentence*, pp. 1361-1374 in Richter, CT

### **3/11: Midterm Exam**

#### **Spring Break**

The canon in British Literature

3/23: Student presentations of selected authors (groups 1,2)

3/25: Student presentations (group 3,4)

3/30: Student presentations (group 5,6,7)

### **V: Critical theories in Practice**

Shelley, *Frankenstein*

4/1: Shelley, pp. 3-98

4/6: Shelley, 98-185

4/8: "A Critical History of *Frankenstein*" and "Reader-Response Criticism and *Frankenstein*"

4/13: "Psychoanalytic Criticism and *Frankenstein*" and "Feminist Criticism and *Frankenstein*"

4/15: "Marxist Criticism and *Frankenstein*" and "Cultural Criticism and *Frankenstein*"

**VI: Detectives/Lovers doing literary work: A.S. Byatt's *Possession***

4/20: Byatt, pp. 1-220

4/22: Byatt, 221-413

4/27: Byatt, 414- 555

4/29: **Casebook Studies are due.** Review and evaluation

The date of the final exam will be announced later.

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## **Assignments for English 2205:**

### **I. Library project (see handout and questions)**

#### **II. Short papers (2 pages, typed):**

1) Choose one of your old essays (a literary analysis of a novel, play, poem, or short story) and write an essay that mainly explores this question: How did I arrive at this interpretation? Other related questions are: What are the critical assumptions and principles that rule the way I read? What are the conventions I follow while reading? The purpose of the assignment is to make you aware of "How I read." Make use of some of the concepts/ideas you've learned about critical approaches in recent weeks. Attach a copy of your original paper to your 2-page analysis.

2) From among the essays in Richter, *The Critical Tradition*, choose one and write a 2-page commentary/ critique on it. You want to give your reader an idea about the writer's main arguments; you also want to examine how this essay relates to one or more of the issues, topics, and texts you've been studying in this course. Include your personal response to the essay in your analysis.

#### **III. Class presentation (based in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vols. 1&2):**

c. Each of you will be placed in one of these seven groups: 1) The Middle Ages 2) The Sixteenth Century 3) The Seventeenth Century 4) The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century 5) The Romantic Period 6) The Victorian Age 7) The Twentieth Century. If you would rather make the decision yourself, let me know as soon as possible! After consulting with members of your group, select an author in your respective literary period and choose a brief text by him/her (It would be more convenient if you chose a text included in the Norton Anthology. If you want to go outside the two volumes, let me know. You have to make copies of your text for the whole class.) You need to tell me ahead of time which text you'll be discussing. The deadline for this announcement is 3/4. I will then make a list of all the works chosen and distribute copies of the list to all the members of the class. Begin your presentation by saying a few words about the literary period. Then go on to a general discussion of your chosen author's life/work. Finally focus on the chosen text and discuss it with the class. Try to make your presentation as lively and interesting as possible. You will have approximately 20-25 minutes.

#### **IV. Final Essay, due April 29 (4-page Introduction + selected essays):**

Your final project is preparing a casebook on a text of your choice.

In your casebook, include 4-5 related critical essays you've found in various journals. Write a 4-page Introduction in which you briefly discuss the essays and tell the reader why you've chosen these pieces, how they relate to one another, what their critical approaches are, and why these particular ways of reading are useful in reading/understanding your chosen text.